

Similar Demands, Different Responses: Teacher Evaluation in the United Kingdom and Singapore

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Abstract

Using a conceptual framework grounded in globalization and the knowledge economy, this paper addresses teacher evaluation policy reform in the United Kingdom*** and Singapore. Specifically, the authors discuss similar demands faced by both countries: maintaining economic competitiveness in a globalized society, preparing citizens to participate in the knowledge economy, and improving teacher quality to facilitate enhanced student learning. Both the UK and Singapore respond to these demands by developing teacher evaluation policies. However, due to the mediating factors of student demographics, educational priorities, and the structure of education systems in each context, the UK and Singapore have created different teacher evaluation systems. It is argued that despite these varying responses, several essential areas underlie all successful teacher evaluation systems. Considering these foundational elements, implications for teacher evaluation policy reform in the United States are discussed.

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*** Due to inconsistent use of terminology in both scholarly and policy literature, when referring to the United Kingdom, we include Britain and Wales.

Similar Demands, Different Responses: Teacher Evaluation in the United Kingdom and Singapore

Globalization has created a knowledge economy that demands a highly educated workforce (Spring, 2009). Since schools play a critical role in educating the citizenry, nations have focused on reforming their educational systems. Particular attention has been paid to teacher policies, as teacher quality is the primary school-based contributor to student success (e.g., Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Hanushek, 1992). As a means to improve teacher quality, teacher evaluation policies are being reformed. In the United States, for example, the recent federal legislation Race to the Top places a premium on implementing policies to increase teacher effectiveness, specifically in the area of teacher evaluation (U.S. Department of Education, 2009b). However, certain challenges exist in reforming these policies. The lack of consensus on the definition of teacher quality, the purpose of teacher evaluation, and the components of evaluation systems are significant obstacles. In addition, tensions exist between local, state, and federal policymakers as well as between various stakeholders within school districts, such as parents, teachers, and administrators. In the US, policymakers continue to grapple with these challenges, as teacher evaluation reform has recently re-emerged onto the education policy landscape.

However, teacher evaluation reform is not a new phenomenon. The United Kingdom and Singapore began developing functional systems of teacher evaluation years ago (DfEE, 1998b; Teo, 2001). Although both countries were responding to demands of the knowledge economy, their teacher evaluation policy reforms evolved in context-specific ways. Three significant influences account for much of the variation in the development of these policies: 1) the demographic composition of the student population, 2) the educational priorities of each country, and 3) the structure of the school systems (i.e., level of centralization). These factors will likely impact the development of education reform in any context because of their role in policy development in general.

Curriculum policy in the UK will inevitably look different from that in Singapore because the countries serve distinct student populations and have different educational priorities. Similarly, the UK has a relatively decentralized education system while Singapore is highly centralized, making the process of policy implementation unique in each context. Although the UK and Singapore differ markedly from the US, it can be beneficial to analyze the evolution of their teacher evaluation policies because the foundational areas of a well-functioning teacher evaluation system are consistent across countries. We argue that by examining the UK and Singapore's teacher evaluation systems, the US can adapt these essential aspects to its own specific needs.

We first address the conceptual framework of globalization that guides our discussion of teacher evaluation systems, justifying our focus on the impact of globalization and the knowledge economy on teacher evaluation reform. Next, we outline our method for conducting secondary analysis of relevant scholarly and policy literature, including a discussion of the selection of the UK and Singapore to serve as cases in which we examine teacher evaluation reform within the context of our conceptual framework. We then address the similar demands facing both countries as well as the mediating factors that are unique for each context. We follow with a brief overview of the evolution of teacher evaluation policies in the UK and Singapore in order to highlight each country's different responses to the demands of the knowledge economy and the potential limitations of teacher evaluation policies shaped by globalization. Finally, we conclude by analyzing the similarities and

differences between these policies and the potential implications for developing teacher evaluation policy in the United States.

Teacher Evaluation in a Global Knowledge Economy

Our analysis of teacher evaluation policy in the United Kingdom and Singapore is situated within the framework of globalization, specifically the convergence of the knowledge economy and accountability reform (Spring, 2009). Although a series of steps is required for policy development, these processes are not necessarily linear. Rather, policies are developed in response to numerous external influences, including political and social contexts (e.g., Kingdon, 1995). With this understanding of the complexities inherent in policy formation, we argue that the factors of globalization, the knowledge economy, and accountability reform have significantly contributed to the elevated importance of teacher quality on the global stage. Education is increasingly important in the global knowledge economy, and since teachers play a central role in facilitating student learning, policies are being designed to evaluate teacher performance and ensure teacher effectiveness.

Globalization is defined here as the international flow of people, goods, services, and ideas that leads to increasing interconnections between nations, economies, and societies. A nation's level of global links can be measured based on four composite indicators: political engagement, technology, personal contact, and economic integration (Carnegie Endowment, 2003). These four broad categories encompass the myriad relationships and connections that define globalization. As technology facilitates communication across international borders, nations are becoming increasingly interdependent. In addition, many nations are explicitly working towards elevating their level of global integration in order to participate in this global network. Globalization affects education through an international understanding that education is essential to economic development and social cohesion (Spring, 2009).

Nations are moving in similar directions to improve their educational systems (Spring, 2009). They are investing more resources into education and encouraging higher levels of educational attainment amongst their citizens (Instance & Theisens, 2008). In addition, international organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), attempt to compare the strength of nations' school systems by assessing student achievement. An international comparison contributes to the global education dialogue, leading to greater exchange of educational ideas, policies, and practices. The result of these exchanges is a global educational superstructure that permeates national and local contexts (Spring, 2009).

The dialogue of the global economy also informs this global education superstructure. Globalization has contributed to the emergence of a knowledge economy focused on building human capital as a means to promote economic growth and global advantage. In 1961, economist Theodore Schultz introduced the idea of a knowledge economy, asserting that human capital or the productive capacities of individuals, as measured by their knowledge and skills, are primary sources of economic wealth (Schultz, 1961). In 1975, economist Gary Becker elevated Schultz's idea of the knowledge economy, asserting that few countries have achieved sustained economic development without investing substantially in the human capital of their labor force (Becker, 1975). Schultz and Becker's idea of the knowledge economy represented a significant paradigm shift from the traditional belief that industry and natural resources were the bulwarks of strong economies. Instead, the knowledge economy places a premium on ideas, requiring a skilled and educated workforce, capable of innovation

to spur the economic growth of nations. By fueling the belief that human capital is the key to prosperity, the birth of a knowledge economy transformed what many nations value and in turn how they invest to compete within the global economy. Specifically, the necessity of building a skilled, educated, and innovative workforce has compelled nations to invest heavily in education.

The rise of the knowledge economy has placed an increasing importance on human capital cultivation. As such, nations have shifted their education policy towards a framework of accountability, designed to increase the likelihood that the desired human capital outcomes are achieved. As a result of these changes, schools are being held increasingly accountable for student achievement. The goal of increased accountability is to ensure that schools are performing their primary function: educating citizens for the nation's future. The United Kingdom has many policies in place to ensure their schools are held accountable. For example, the government makes test score information publicly available to allow parents to hold schools accountable for student performance (Machin & Vignoles, 2006). In Singapore, secondary schools were ranked according to students' results on annual standardized exams starting in 1992. The rankings included students' overall performance as well as a comparison between students' scores when they entered the school and their current scores, thereby measuring the added value of a particular school on a student's achievement (Ng, 2007). Although Singapore's school ranking system has changed, it still has a strong focus on accountability. In addition to utilizing standardized achievement tests, nations across the globe are implementing a variety of accountability policies that attempt to ensure that schools and teachers are in fact helping students learn.

Teacher evaluation is one example of an accountability policy designed to ensure the cultivation of human capital among a nation's students. While schools are pressured to increase student achievement in order to meet the demands of the knowledge economy, teachers are directly responsible for their students' academic learning. As a result, school systems frequently aim to improve the quality of their teaching force. In turn, teacher evaluation reform has emerged as a primary means for nations to ensure that effective, high-quality teachers are in each classroom and are held accountable for human capital development. As demonstrated in Figure 1, the relationship between the knowledge economy and accountability reform in education provides a unique framework for analyzing teacher evaluation in the UK and Singapore.

Debates continue about the positive and negative consequences of globalization and globalization's impact on education, in particular (see Neubauer, 2008 for a discussion). Additionally, the emergence of the knowledge economy has benefitted certain individuals and countries far more than others and has arguably contributed to increased inequality both within and across nations (e.g., Neubauer, 2008; Ball, 1998). Increased accountability measures in education policy are also contested reforms with debatable consequences (e.g., McNeil, 2000; Skrla & Scheurich, 2004). In this paper, we do not argue for or against globalization, the knowledge economy, or stringent accountability measures but merely recognize that for better or worse, policymakers consider the global knowledge economy when creating education reforms such as teacher evaluation policies. We do, however, find the overarching framework of globalization to be a useful lens to analyze these policies, in part because policymakers in the UK and Singapore – as well as in other countries, such as the US – use similar rhetoric to support their teacher quality reforms.



Figure 1. The knowledge economy, accountability, and teacher evaluation policy reform in the context of globalization

Method

In the present work, we synthesize and review information on the development of teacher evaluation policies in the UK and Singapore. Specifically, we look at government and policy documents as well as scholarly research. These resources provide information on the demographics of the school-age population, the educational priorities, and the structure of the school system for each country of interest. These data inform our discussion on the evolution of teacher evaluation policies and the resulting structure of the evaluation systems in each country.

We chose to analyze teacher evaluation policies in the UK and Singapore for several reasons. First, we aimed to focus on countries whose teacher evaluation policies were relatively well established so that it would be possible to trace the trajectory of the reforms from start to finish. Second, the UK and Singapore are markedly different countries with distinct histories, particularly in regards to colonialism and development processes. Third, despite the country's differences, we were struck by the similarity in rhetoric used by policymakers in the two countries when discussing teacher evaluation reform. While the UK and Singapore face similar demands of the globalized knowledge economy, each has approached teacher evaluation reform differently, providing useful models for other countries exploring teacher evaluation reform.

Similar Demands

Teacher evaluation policy in the United Kingdom and Singapore has evolved in response to three similar demands including: maintaining economic competitiveness in a

globalized society, preparing citizens to participate in the knowledge economy, and improving teacher quality to facilitate enhanced student learning. These demands are directly linked to the forces of globalization and the knowledge economy and illuminate the significance of increasing accountability in education policy reform in a globalized society.

Economic Competitiveness in a Globalized Society

The forces of globalization have permeated the educational system of the United Kingdom, encouraging the production of human capital to compete in the knowledge economy. In 1998, the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) issued a report discussing a “renaissance for Britain” with the onset of “the age of information and global competition.” According to the report, “old ways of doing things” are disappearing as new jobs and industries emerge, demanding new skills (DfEE, 1998a, p. 1).

Leadership in Singapore is also clear about the desire to maintain global economic competitiveness in the 21st century. In 1997, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong claimed that the future will be “intensely global” and “[c]ompetition between cities, countries, sub-regions and regions will be intense” (Goh, 1997, p. 1). He also discussed how economic competition would be ongoing, and no country will have “permanent advantages” (p. 1), so it is critical that Singapore actively strives to succeed within the global economic competition. Clearly, the governments of both the United Kingdom and Singapore emphasize the paramount need for their nations to remain competitive in a globalized society.

Education for a Knowledge Economy

Education is the primary means that both countries employ to cultivate human capital and increase their global competitiveness. The United Kingdom places the key to success in the new global knowledge economy as “the continuous education and development of the human mind and imagination” (DfEE, 1998a, p. 1). The shift towards a global knowledge economy and its link to education in the UK epitomizes the importance of education in a global society. Posing the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and understanding as the “single greatest challenge” for the United Kingdom, both economically and socially, reveals the demands on the national government to shift education policy towards cultivating human capital (DfEE, 1998, p. 1).

Singapore believes strongly that “The wealth of a nation lies in its people” (Ministry of Education, 2010a, p. 1); government leaders repeatedly make explicit references to the knowledge economy and the importance of education. Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong (1997) stated directly, “A nation’s wealth in the 21st century will depend on the capacity of its people to learn” (p. 1). He discussed the importance of knowledge and innovation, particularly in the area of technology, and claimed, “Education and training are central to how nations will fare in this future. Strong nations … will distinguish themselves from the rest by how well their people learn and adapt to change” (p. 1). Singapore’s commitment to education as a means to prepare its citizens for the global knowledge economy is clear.

Importance of Teacher Quality

Just as both countries emphasize the importance of education, the United Kingdom and Singapore recognize the critical nature teacher quality plays in student learning. In 1998, the UK Department for Education and Employment released a second report, placing teachers

as central to the mission of meeting the challenge of change in the global economy. Within this report, the Prime Minister reiterates that education is the Government's top priority and asserts, "The teaching profession is critical to this mission" (DfEE, 1998b, pg. 4). This report marked the beginning of several reforms to teacher policy within the United Kingdom, most notably in the structure and operations of teacher evaluation.

The government of Singapore also recognizes the importance of teachers and has implemented policies that reflect this value. The Ministry of Education asserts its commitment to ensuring that teachers have the training and resources necessary to bring excellence to the classroom (MOE, 2010a). Teachers are respected for their difficult, important work: "[Teachers] influence young minds and inculcate sound social and moral values through word and deed, within and outside the classroom" (MOE, 2010a, p. 3), and are ranked as the most important profession in Singapore according to a public opinion survey (Lui, 2007). Singapore is proud to have one of the world's best-performing school systems and credits its teaching force and "first-rate instruction" for its success in producing intelligent and ambitious students (MOE, 2008, p. 2). The fact that teachers are given utmost respect as well as credit for Singapore's successful school system proves that Singapore realizes the critical nature of teacher quality in both educating the nation's youth and remaining globally competitive.

Mediating Factors

Although the demands driving teacher evaluation policy reform are similar for both the UK and Singapore, three factors mediate the content and structure of their policy initiatives. First, the demographics of the student population influence the types of programs each country implements to meet the needs of its students. Second, the educational priorities of each nation set the policy agenda. Finally, the structure of the education system, specifically the level of centralization, determines how the policies unfold from the national to the school level.

Demographics

The state-supported British school system serves a relatively homogenous student population. According to the 2010 School Census, the British school system served 8.1 million students with 4.1 million in primary schools, 3.3 million in state-funded secondary schools, and 576,900 in independent or private schools. Although the overall student population is decreasing, the number of students qualifying for free meals (a measure of poverty) is increasing with 18.5% of primary school students, 15.4% of secondary school students, and 34.9% of independent school students qualifying for free meals (Department for Education, 2010). In the Census, the ethnic composition of the student population is classified as White British or Minority Ethnic. The census classifies 25.5% of primary school students as Minority Ethnic with 16% speaking a language other than English as their first language. Secondary schools served 21.4% Minority Ethnic students with 11.6% speaking a language other than English as their first language (Department for Education, 2010).

Singapore is a small, relatively homogenous country. According to the 2010 Census (Department of Statistics, 2010a), Singapore has a population of 5,076,700, 17.4% of which is under the age of fifteen. Singapore has 356 schools across its system; there are 29,000 teachers and nearly 500,000 students in primary and secondary schools (Ministry of Education, 2009 & 2010). There are three main ethnic groups in Singapore. Approximately

74% of the population is Chinese, 13% is Malay, and 9% is Indian. In schools, 310,000 students are Chinese, 80,500 are Malay, and 50,500 are Indian (Department of Statistics, 2010b). All students in Singapore are bilingual; core instruction is conducted in English but children also take classes in their Mother Tongue language (Ministry of Education, 2008). The United Kingdom and Singapore both have fairly homogenous student populations. This homogeneity directly affects educational decisions, such as national curricula, since the countries may not address issues of diversity. However, both nations still have a substantial minority population in their public schools (roughly one-quarter and one-third of the students in the UK and Singapore, respectively), and some argue that education is highly racialized in these countries (e.g., Barr, 2006; Gillborn, 2005). Our analyses in the present paper reflect the nations' policies, which seem to largely reflect a perceived homogenous student population.

Educational Priorities

Education within the United Kingdom is guided by a unique educational philosophy shaped by its history and future goals. This philosophy dictates the educational priorities of the country and is shaped dramatically by the political party in power and the forces of globalization. In the mid-1990s the Labour Government was elected with Prime Minister Tony Blair asserting that the Government's priorities were "education, education, education" (Glennerster, 2002, pg. 120). The Labor Government's renewed focus on education dramatically transformed the educational priorities of the country, ushering in a standards-based accountability framework designed to eliminate poverty and confront social exclusion by setting high standards for all students (DfEE, 1998b). Throughout the end of the 1990s and into the 2000s, accountability and performance remained a central force in shaping the government's educational priorities.

In 2004, a new dimension was added to the Government's educational priorities with the Children's Act. The Children's Act established legislation for whole-system reform outlining statutory duties and new accountabilities in all public sectors for children's services, including education (DfES, 2004). The Children's Act placed young people at the center of the Government's reform agenda, setting new desirable outcomes for future generations to maximize their life opportunities and minimize the risks they may face in achieving their goals. One of the five outcomes put forth in the Children's Act 2004 is enjoying and achieving, a goal directly linked to education. Within this outcome, children are expected to be ready for school and attend school, achieve to national standards at both primary and secondary levels, and achieve personal and social development (DfES, 2004). The fusion of standards-based accountability and child welfare remains among the primary educational priorities of the UK.

In May 2010, a new government was elected and continues to operate with similar educational priorities. The new Coalition Government continues to work to improve child welfare asserting, "Schools should be engines of social mobility – the places where accidents of birth and the unfairness of life's lottery are overcome through the democratisation of access to knowledge" (Gove, 2010b). The government is working to "...raise attainment for all children, turn round underperforming schools where students have been poorly served for years, close the gap between rich and poor and make opportunity more equal" (Gove, 2010a). Although the new Coalition Government is utilizing unique mechanisms to achieve these priorities, the central role of opportunity and achievement for young people continues to guide their policies and greatly influence their actions.

Singapore currently prioritizes a holistic education that takes the whole child into account. The MOE released a document in 2010 titled, *Nurturing our Young for the Future: Competencies for the 21st Century*. The primary question addressed is stated simply: “How do we prepare our children today to thrive in a future driven by globalisation and technological advancements” (p. 1)? The MOE depicts four critical outcomes for Singaporean students. Each child should become a confident person, a self-directed learner, an active contributor, and a concerned citizen (p. 2). Singapore emphasizes the importance of values that underlie knowledge and skills and “define a person’s character” (p. 3). The core values emphasized by the MOE are respect, responsibility, integrity, resilience, and harmony (p. 3). Social and emotional competencies are also addressed. Students should possess self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making (p. 3). The MOE itemizes three broad competencies for the twenty-first century: civic literacy, global awareness, and cross-cultural skills; critical and inventive thinking; and information and communication skills (p. 3).

The focus on values, social and emotional competencies as well as the type of person each child is to become demonstrates Singapore’s educational focus on the whole child. Nowhere in the *Competencies for the 21st Century* are academic skills mentioned. The importance of physical education, art, and music are addressed and are planned to be strengthened: “These subjects are integral to a holistic education experience for our students” (p. 4). The MOE also mentions the critical nature of teachers knowing students as individuals and “paying attention to their development in every domain” (p. 4). Singapore’s concentration on enrichment activities and students as individuals further demonstrate the MOE’s commitment to educating the whole child. The MOE proved its emphasis on holistic education by revising the school ranking system “to encourage schools in their efforts to provide a broad-based education” (Ministry of Education, 2010c, p. 2). Although Singapore does not discredit strict academic learning, its students consistently perform well on international exams, especially in math and science (Ministry of Education, 2008), and the current focus on holistic education may be a reaction to a former exclusive focus on academics (Ng, 2008). Singapore’s educational priorities for the future are much broader and encompass a wider range of personal competencies than those found in the UK.

Level of Centralization

The school systems within the UK operate under a mix of centralized and decentralized decision-making authorities that uniquely shape their educational policies. Historically, decentralization of authority was sponsored as a means to improve the quality of schools. In recent years, the United Kingdom has seen even greater decentralization with the creation of more academies, operating much like charter schools in the United States, and greater autonomies for school heads regarding school level policies (Gove, 2010b). However, in the UK, education is not strictly decentralized. There is a national curriculum, complete with standards for teaching and learning as well as a national accountability system (Machin & Vignoles, 2006). Centralizing curricular decisions at the federal level runs contrary to the local autonomies afforded to schools. While national policy determines required end goals, local authorities decide on the means necessary to achieve them. However, the combination of centralized and decentralized education policies do not negate one another as education reform continues to develop according to this mix.

The decentralized nature of school autonomies directly informs teacher evaluation policies in the United Kingdom. Although the pay scales and career paths are determined at the federal level, teacher performance evaluation is under local control. In the UK, school governing bodies establish the schools performance management policy in alignment with federal regulations and ultimately decide whether or not a teacher advances to the next career stage and pay scale (Santiago & Benavides, 2009). Ultimately, the combination of centralized and decentralized authority within the education system in the UK directly informs the structure of education policies including teacher evaluation, establishing a unique combination of centralized and decentralized autonomy in teacher performance management.

Singapore's government and education system are highly centralized. National standards and curricula exist for most subjects and grades (Ministry of Education, 2010a). Similarly, teacher evaluation policies are made through the centralized system; all schools must use the same guidelines and occasionally are subjected to calibration to ensure consistency throughout the system (Santiago & Benavides, 2009). The Ministry of Education, however, has taken some steps to provide individual schools more autonomy. Specialised Independent Schools were created in order to "focus on developing students' specific talents and abilities" (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 7) in areas such as the arts, sports, mathematics, and science. The School Excellence Model (SEM) is a key component of Singapore's experimental decentralization efforts. "Turning from an external inspection to an internal appraisal exercise" (Mok, 2002, p. 357), schools conduct self-evaluations and create their own plans for improvement. The development of specialized schools and the autonomy given to schools with the implementation of the SEM demonstrate the MOE's initial attempts to incorporate some decentralization into its education system. Overall, however, Singapore's education system remains highly centralized, with critical decisions being made at Headquarters.

Different Responses

Based on the demographics of the student population, the educational priorities of each country, and the unique structure of the schools systems, teacher evaluation policy has evolved in ways that reflect the unique contexts of the United Kingdom and Singapore.

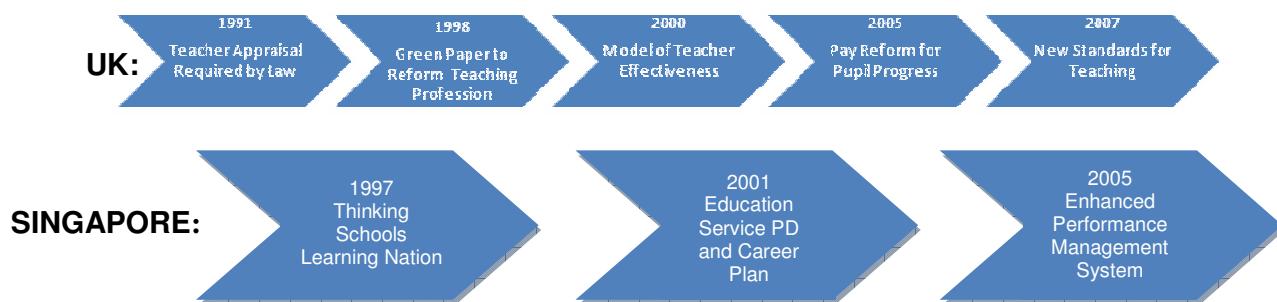


Figure 2. Evolution of teacher evaluation policy development

United Kingdom

The evolution of teacher evaluation policy in the United Kingdom has occurred over the last thirty years. A significant concern with teacher quality and accountability emerged during the 1970's and grew in significance throughout the 1980's as the school improvement movement flourished and the conservative government focused on raising standards in

schools by managing teachers performance (Bartlett, 2000). Towards the end of the 1980's and the beginning of the early 1990's, teacher quality policies took center stage. Performance Appraisal became required by law as part of the Education Regulations of 1991. This new mandate from the central government required all schools to develop and implement performance appraisal systems by 1992 and to conduct performance evaluation annually for all teachers by 1994. The mandate required all appraisals to include observation of teaching, interviews and goal setting meetings, and a final review; it was intended to assist in professional development and career planning (Bartlett, 2000).

To facilitate the implementation of teacher evaluation and overall teacher policy reform, the central government created the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in 1992, an independent national level inspection agency established to supervise and report publicly on the quality and standards of local school and teacher provisions (Reynolds, Mujils, & Trebarne, 2003). The creation of Ofsted marked the beginning of greater government involvement in education policy with increased regulation and inspection of traditionally local practices by government officials.

Major changes to teacher performance appraisal came in 1996 when the Office for Standards in Education released a report stating that while appraisal was necessary, the existing level of implementation was poor and needed intensive reform at the school level (Bartlett, 2000). The Ofsted report, coupled with the assertion by the Chief Inspector of Schools that there might be 15,000 incompetent teachers, led the government to channel even greater focus on policies to improve teacher quality (Earnshaw, Marchington, Ritchie, & Torrington, 2004). This focus grew significantly with the 1997 election of a Labour government under the leadership of Tony Blair. Under the Blair administration, education shifted from a social to an economic policy, ushering in an era of increased accountability and a renewed focus on teacher quality (Furlong, 2008).

Of primary importance to Blair was reforming the teaching profession to improve student achievement. In 1998, the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE, 1998b) issued a Green Paper transforming the teaching profession and calling for a new career structure to recruit, retain, and reward good teachers in England and Wales (Ingvarson, 2002). Under this new structure, teacher career paths were differentiated, pay was linked to career progression through five stages, and strategic mechanisms, including increased salaries, were implemented to increase the quality of the teaching pool. Among the most significant reforms outlined was the Threshold Assessment, which allowed teachers at the top pay scale who demonstrated sustained levels of achievement and commitment to gain a 10% pay increase and access further pay steps on the extended salary scale (Ingvarson, 2002). In addition, the 1998 Green Paper made teacher appraisal part of the quality assurance process, requiring annual appraisal linked to pay with the rate of progress through the traditional incremental scale dependent on performance against agreed targets (Bartlett, 2000). The focus on holding teachers accountable for their performance directly reflects the increased accountability brought on by a shift towards a global knowledge economy and the need to equip students with the skills necessary to sustain economic growth.

The significant focus on improving teacher quality through evaluation outlined in the 1998 Green Paper contributed to an increasing shift towards greater accountability of teachers to uphold the government's education policy agenda over the next ten years. In 2000, a new Performance Management System was adopted by all schools. This system included an annual planning meeting, monitoring of teacher performance, and review of progress. It

extended the threshold system by including compulsory observation of the teachers' instruction as part of the process. The new system, while focused on improving teacher practice through professional development, included a summative evaluation component to identify ineffective teachers (Reynolds, Mujils, & Treharne, 2003). The Performance Management System was designed to increase the quality of teacher evaluation by explicitly including teachers in the process and linking evaluation to improving teacher practice. However, the system placed little emphasis on linking teachers to actual pupil performance.

In 2005, a new "managed professionalism" came into effect that impacted appraisal significantly, accomplishing the initial Green Paper recommendation to link teacher pay to performance. The new Performance Management System outlined specific components required in appraisal including an assessment of classroom performance through observation, individualized analysis of pupil progress, and the mandate that student progress must be taken into account in the setting of individual targets for each teacher (Furlong, 2008). The focus on performance, however, was met with an increased emphasis on professional development and teacher improvement. Also in 2005, the Training and Development Agency for Schools was established to coordinate professional development and training for all school staff (Isore, 2009). Coupling increased accountability with additional professional development marked the beginning of a truly integrated summative and formative teacher performance appraisal system.

Teacher evaluation policy in the United Kingdom continues to develop and evolve today but remains uniquely similar to the Performance Management System of 2005. Although well-aligned with the government's policy agenda, performance management has been criticized as trying to diminish meaningful teaching and learning by valuing them according to a set of auditable and measureable outcomes (Elliot, 2001). In 2007 new standards were introduced to provide a framework for evaluation in accordance with broader school policies, and have been integrated into the 2005 Performance Management Framework (Isore, 2009). The emphasis on meeting high performance standards and tying teacher performance directly to student achievement illuminates the shift towards greater accountability as a means to improve teacher quality. However, the renewed focus on teacher development is also represented in existing policies for teacher evaluation. While some argue that this renewed focus on teacher evaluation within the UK leaves much to be desired in terms of defining and identifying effective teachers, it is clearly a top priority for the UK as they struggle to remain competitive in the global knowledge economy (Elliot, 2001). Moreover, the fusion of summative and formative evaluation procedures, as well as the combination of centralized and decentralized policy implementation, evidences the unique response of the United Kingdom to the demands of the knowledge economy.

Singapore

Major education reform began in Singapore in 1997 with Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong's speech, "Shaping Our Future: Thinking Schools, Learning Nation" (Goh, 1997). The speech delineated the importance of the knowledge economy in the future of a globalized world. Prime Minister Goh specifically focused on education, both of youth and continued learning for adults. He stated, "The task of education must therefore be to provide the young with the core knowledge and core skills, and the habits of learning, that enable them to learn continuously throughout their lives" (p. 1). The speech outlined the need to restructure the curriculum in Singapore's schools in order to

better develop the creative thinking skills and learning skills required for the future ... [and] cut back on the amount of content knowledge that students are required to learn, and to encourage teachers and students to spend more time on projects that can help develop these skills. (p. 3)

“Thinking Schools, Learning Nation” also called for a redefinition of the role of teachers. Prime Minister Goh emphasized the necessity of teachers to remain current with best practices in their field; they “must be given time to reflect, learn and keep up-to-date” (p. 3) in order to ensure that school learning is relevant to their students, “relating what is learnt to current events and issues” (p. 3). In the speech, Prime Minister Goh also discussed the need for schools to inform education policy so policy makers are aware of “how policies are working out on the ground” (p. 4). Schools were given more autonomy in order to make decisions that best met their specific needs.

In addition to the focus on schools, the “Learning Nation” component of the Prime Minister’s vision dealt with the importance of life-long learning. “LEARNING NATION will require innovation at every level of society ... Even the most well-educated worker will stagnate if he does not keep upgrading his skills and knowledge” (p. 4). Society will be improved through continual improvement in knowledge and skills; everyone must strive to do their job better. Prime Minister Tong claimed that “Thinking Schools, Learning Nation” is not merely a slogan but rather, “It is a formula to enable Singapore to compete and stay ahead” (p. 5). This influential speech proved to be the backbone and impetus of many education policies in Singapore, including those regarding teachers and teacher evaluation.

In 2001, the Minister for Education, Teo Chee Hean, launched an innovative plan to reshape teaching as a profession. The Education Service Professional Development and Career Plan (Edu-Pac; Teo, 2001) emphasized the critical role of teachers and the need to attract and retain high-quality teachers in the education system. One of the main components of Edu-Pac was a new career structure with three distinct tracks: a teaching track, a leadership track, and a senior specialist track (p. 2). Educators choose which track they want to pursue, based on their professional interests, strengths, and goals. The teaching track is “for teachers who make teaching excellence in the classroom the primary focus in their careers” (p. 2). There are many opportunities for professional development and career promotions within this track. A teacher could become a Senior Teacher or a Master Teacher, offering teachers the option of continuing to teach and focus on classroom instruction while obtaining a leadership role that is accompanied with a senior-level salary (p. 3). The leadership track is for individuals who wish to be leaders in schools and in education headquarters; Edu-Pac added an additional promotion higher than previously available to school leaders. The senior specialist track was a new addition to the MOE, and these individuals were planned to be “a strong group of officers at [Headquarters] with deep knowledge and skills in specific areas of education who will innovate, break new ground and keep [Singapore] at the leading edge in educational development” (p. 3). The tracks offer education professionals more opportunities to explore areas of interest within the field of education. Educators can move across tracks if they meet the criteria for the position they wish to obtain.

Edu-Pac also called for a new recognition structure for teachers. Minister Teo claimed, “MOE will adopt a total rewards structure that recognises and rewards good performance as well as provides learning and development opportunities ... We will establish a stronger link between pay and performance” (p. 4). Edu-Pac outlined immediate raises for teachers, including financial bonuses rewarding years of service. The new policy emphasizes

Singapore's commitment to ensuring a high-quality teaching force to deal with the demands of the knowledge economy. Although Edu-Pac called for performance-based pay and an improved teacher assessment, the details of the performance management system were not yet in place in 2001.

The Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS), considered part of the Edu-Pac framework, was developed in 2003 and gradually phased in to the education system so that by 2005, EPMS was fully implemented. EPMS "allowed a more structured process of assessing the performance of officers based on competencies and focused on helping [Singapore] teachers identify areas for improvement" (Tharman, 2006, p. 4). The new assessment system is not a general assessment of performance but rather "a more explicit discussion of [teachers'] performance in specific areas" (p. 4), thereby making it easier for teachers to seek meaningful professional development.

EPMS assesses teachers based on key results areas and overall competencies. Key results areas include the "quality learning of students, pastoral care and well-being of students ... [a teacher's] contribution to the school, collaboration with parents, and professional development" (Santiago & Benavides, 2009, p. 36). The competencies, however, refer to a teacher's "underlying characteristics that drive outstanding performance ... [such as] nurturing the whole child, teaching creatively, [and] working with others" (Santiago & Benavides, 2009, p. 36). The MOE evaluates teachers based on their performance as well as their potential for future performance, demonstrated primarily through their competencies. Teacher evaluation is conducted at the school level by a panel of supervisors, but all supervisors must follow the EPMS guidelines developed by the MOE (Santiago & Benavides, 2009). Teachers are assessed annually and are financially rewarded, either on an individual or group basis, for excellent performance. There are no sanctions for ineffective teachers; instead, teachers seek appropriate professional development to strengthen areas of weakness.

Table 1 Components of Teacher Evaluation Systems

Components	United Kingdom	Singapore
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summative: Career Advancement and Pay Scale Increase • Formative: Continuous Professional Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summative: Performance Pay and Promotion • Formative: Teacher Improvement
Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Observations based on individual school protocols • Meetings and interviews between teachers and evaluators • Pupil performance • Portfolio assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Observations with EPMS Protocols
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headteachers • External evaluators • Advanced Skills teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Supervisor • Panel of Supervisors for Teacher Teams • Individual and Group Performance Pay • No Sanctions
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous career advancement with monetary rewards • Targeted professional development • Dismissal 	
Key Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Stages: Qualified, Core, Post Threshold, Excellent, Advanced • Individualized professional development plans • Performance driven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Track • Focus on Underlying Characteristics as Competencies • Performance and Potential Driven

Note: Sources include Santiago & Benavides, 2009 and Isore, 2009.

Discussion

The demands of global competitiveness, education for the knowledge economy, and improved teacher quality drove the evolution of teacher evaluation policy reform in the United Kingdom and Singapore. The United Kingdom has responded to these demands by implementing a performance management system grounded in holding teachers accountable for student achievement and facilitating continuous professional development. In contrast, Singapore has responded by creating a teacher evaluation system that emphasizes both student learning and underlying characteristics that promote effective teaching. Although the teacher evaluation systems differ in the UK and Singapore, both systems are built on similar foundational elements, which serve as the key building blocks to developing teacher evaluation systems.

There are four essential areas undergirding teacher evaluation in both countries, which we argue are critical to creating a functional teacher evaluation system in all contexts. The first area constitutes a clear definition of teacher quality. Without this, the dimensions of teacher practice under evaluation cannot be measured effectively. Second, it is important to have a well-defined purpose of teacher evaluation. Because formative and summative evaluations have distinct goals, the purpose of evaluation plays a key role in determining the appropriate measures and structures involved in assessing teacher performance. The third essential area of functional teacher evaluation systems is deciding how teacher practice will be measured. The measurement tools, for example classroom observations or student achievement scores, determine what characteristics and practices are evaluated and included in the assessment of teacher quality. The fourth and final area of importance is support from key stakeholders, including parents, teachers, students, administrators, and community members. These stakeholders must agree upon and have confidence in the definition of teacher quality, the purpose of evaluating teacher performance, and the measures used for evaluation. Due to the impact teacher performance has on these stakeholders, it is extremely difficult to implement a successful teacher evaluation system without their support.

Depending upon the demographics, educational priorities, and the structure of the national school system, the four essential areas mentioned above will likely be addressed in unique ways within various contexts. For example, both the United Kingdom and Singapore clearly define the characteristics of a high-quality teacher. The United Kingdom defined good teaching with the implementation of their performance management system. This system identifies high quality teachers as those who communicate the standards to students and continually work to develop their instructional skills. Teacher quality is determined by demonstrations of strong instructional practice as well as pupil performance outcomes (Reynolds, Mujils, & Treharne, 2003). Similarly, Singapore has defined both the “what” and the “how” of good teaching through its key results areas and competencies, respectively. While key results areas include clear outcomes, such as quality of student learning, the competencies capture teachers’ underlying characteristics and personal attributes, such as nurturing the whole child, that lead to long-term success in the classroom (Santiago & Benavides, 2009). Although these definitions differ, they serve as the basis on which each country’s teacher evaluation system is developed. The centrality of defining teacher quality extends beyond the UK and Singapore. We argue that regardless of context and content, a definition of teacher quality is of paramount importance to building an effective system of teacher evaluation.

Similarly, the purpose of teacher evaluation and the tools used to measure teacher performance are evident in both the UK and Singapore. In the United Kingdom, teacher evaluation is both summative and formative, designed to identify and reward effective teachers and to improve teacher quality through continuous professional development. The use of multiple measures, including pupil performance, individual conferences and interviews, as well as classroom observations, provide a comprehensive picture of teacher practice (Furlong, 2008). In Singapore, the purpose of teacher evaluation is primarily formative, encouraging professional development in areas of weakness. Financial bonuses or career advancement are available as rewards; however, there are no sanctions (Santiago & Benavides, 2009). The evaluation tool is standardized across the country, but it is implemented on the school level by a panel of supervisors (Santiago & Benavides, 2009). Much like teacher quality, having a clear purpose - be it formative and/or summative, with or without rewards and sanctions – is critical to any successful teacher evaluation system. Finally, both the UK and Singapore have achieved broad stakeholder support, an element that makes it possible to implement and sustain functioning teacher evaluation systems in all contexts.

Currently, the United States is responding to similar demands to improve teacher quality as the UK and Singapore. In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act introduced new legislation known as Race to the Top (U.S. Department of Education, 2009a). Race to the Top rewards states that take serious action to reform education, specifically in the area of teacher effectiveness. Race to the Top includes a focus on improving and developing data systems and implementing policies to recruit, retain, reward, and develop effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most (U.S. Department of Education, 2009b). Moreover, a recent opportunity to apply for flexibilities to the No Child Left Behind accountability policy includes the requirement that states work to design and implement new teacher evaluation systems (CITE). As a result, federal and state governments are considering policies that reform teacher evaluation. Due to the decentralized nature of the US government, extreme variation exists across state and district evaluation policies. Several US districts currently implement teacher evaluation systems that address the four aforementioned essential areas (e.g., Cincinnati; Washington, D.C.). The majority of states and districts in the US continue to grapple with creating a strong teacher evaluation system. However, defining teacher quality, having a clear purpose for evaluating teachers, choosing appropriate measures, and cultivating stakeholder support will likely facilitate the development of a successful teacher evaluation system within each unique context.

In this globalizing world, countries are responding to similar demands. Since the knowledge economy emphasizes the importance of education, many countries are reforming teacher evaluation as a means to ensure high-quality teaching and improved student learning. The policies of each country will inevitably differ. However, countries like the United States, whose teacher evaluation policies are in the early stages of development, may learn from other countries that are further along in the process. The UK and Singapore provide two examples of successful teacher evaluation systems. Although different, they share common foundational characteristics. Defining teacher quality, having a clearly articulated purpose, using valid and reliable measures, and securing stakeholder support are the building blocks of successful teacher evaluation systems. Therefore, regardless of context or content, nations may benefit by beginning the development of their teacher evaluation systems by addressing these critical areas.

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